



Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

16 May 1984

AM. ER 84-2169

NOTE TO: DCI 18 MAY 1984

As promised, here is the draft letter for the Congressional leadership. Neither Clair George nor Jim Taylor has seen this version, since Clair has been on the Hill all afternoon and Jim is out of town. I doubt, however, that either will have any major problems, since both saw the earlier version.



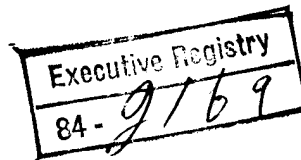
Helene L. Boatner

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Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence
11 May 1984

NOTE TO: DCI

Attached are some preliminary thoughts on the proposed letter to Congress. Obviously the bones need a lot of flesh and the words will have to be chosen with care. I have not, of course, had a chance to get the DDCI's input but will do so as soon as he returns. I would also like to see you for your thoughts, as well as your reactions to what I've done so far. I will be downtown for a couple of hours on another matter but expect to be back about 6:15 p.m. should you want to see me. No one will be in my office after about 5:30 p.m. but I will check with the Operations Center for any message before going home. If I don't hear anything, I will call for an appointment next week.



Helene L. Boatner

DCI
EXEC
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Process not now serving best interests of Congress, CIA, or American people. Need to change attitudes, procedures so Congress and Agency can both do their jobs with minimal friction and wasted time and energy.

Three fundamental truths:

- Oversight is essential to all involved.
- Need for secrecy deeply entrenched in Agency; concern about sending sensitive information to large, loose structure on Hill real and exacerbated by actuality or suspicion of loose use of the information.
- Service on oversight committees imposes major demands on members (time, need to keep knowledge to themselves) with no compensating benefits. Real public service in purest form but causes nothing but trouble for members--comes to public attention only in the context of problems.

Current situation has destructive impact on us. Diverts time from management of very sensitive and important programs. Plethora of demands from a wide array of members and staffers creates opportunities for confusion, contradiction. Emphasis on speed encourages us to give minimal responses, because we are concerned we may give inaccurate response because we have not had time to learn real story. Hostile tone of questions and charges feeds

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concern that information we provide will be mishandled. Push from Congress on information about decisions not yet made in Executive Branch sometimes puts us in the middle.

Moreover, current uproar could lead to consideration of legislation that would create major Constitutional issues, impose obligations on Congress, as well as us, that neither would welcome.

Key to overcoming hurdles is establishing mutual trust so can discuss real issues dispassionately. Need to focus on important questions, not minutia.

Sincere in commitment to keep oversight committees fully and currently informed and am taking steps to avoid inadvertant lapses and real or apparent inconsistencies. Records on past exchanges being centralized; chain of command for responding to Congressional needs being strengthened. All employees being reminded forcefully of moral as well as legal obligation to give Congress the information it needs to carry out its responsibilities effectively--to provide full and frank answers to questions and to address the important issues whether or not specific questions asked. Working with SSCI staff to develop agreement on procedures.

Because of particular Congressional concern with Central America and lack of bipartisan consensus on this matter, want to make particular efforts to keep you appropriately informed. Would like to establish regular periodic

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briefing schedule for staffs (weekly, biweekly, or whatever, but often enough so nothing falls between the cracks) to keep them current on developments. We would, of course, continue to brief the committees as well, as they request. (Alternatively, is it desirable to further institutionalize the role of staffs? Perhaps we should stress the importance of dealing with members instead. This might be a way to hint that poor staff performance recently created a good deal of misunderstanding.)

None of this will eliminate climate of suspicion and anger, however, unless get Hill cooperation. Need to be able to retain transcripts so can respond to questions that cite our earlier remarks. Need to be told in advance what key issues will be, not confronted with surprises when we appear. Need to be permitted to deliver our briefings, not deflected with questions that lead us away from the main points. Need effective procedures on your part to control staff demands--limit the number and eliminate redundancy and frivolous inquiries. Need for you to reduce the number of staffers with access to sensitive information, particularly the number of SSCI staffers. (We should stress that quality of Agency-Congressional dialogue probably declines as number of players increases.) Need you to make a good faith effort to investigate possibility that unauthorized leaks coming from staff; whether or not staff is responsible, concern here is real and appearance of inaction on your part strengthens tendency here to hold back.

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